

REMARKS

Applicant thanks Examiner Mussa Shaawat for the Examiner Interview with Applicant's Attorney Shahpar Shahpar on January 27, 2009. Although the pending Office Action is marked "Final", Attorney Shahpar Shahpar confirmed with Examiner Mussa Shaawat that the Office Action is a Non-Final Office Action and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's PAIR system correctly shows a Non-Final Office Action.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 18, 24, and 25 remain pending in this application. Claims 2-6, 9-17, 19-23 and 26-48 have been withdrawn from further consideration, without prejudice, as being drawn to non-elected inventions or species. Claims 1 and 18 are amended in this Reply.

Support for the amendments may be found in the originally filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. For example, support for the amendments can be found at paragraphs [0039], [0041], [0045], and [0057] through [0062] of this published application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 1, 7, 18, 24, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly having method steps not tied to a particular machine and not performing a transformation.

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 18 to include method steps tied to machine elements and respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 7, 18, and 24

Claims 1, 7, 18, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Brandt (US 5,892,905) in view of McCaslin (US 6,868,397). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to disclose at least the following claim elements as recited in claim 1:

the users of the plurality of dealerships accessing the computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships in order to assist customers of the plurality of rental locations; via a computer-terminal, displaying a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of rental equipment reserved

and the date of reservation for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships; and

via the computer-server, tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information including the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships;

wherein via the computer-terminal communicating with the computer-server, each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships; and

wherein via the computer-server the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of dealerships is accessible via the network by all of the other rental locations on the network.

Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to disclose at least the following claim elements as recited in claim 18:

the plurality of rental locations on a network of a plurality of dealerships, wherein users of the plurality of dealerships accessing a computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships in order to assist customers of the plurality of rental locations;

via a computer-terminal, displaying on a screen in communication with a computer a reservation summary having reservation information pertaining to the type of rental equipment reserved and the date of reservation for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships;

via the computer-server, tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information including the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships; and

wherein via the computer-terminal communicating with the computer-server, each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and exclude the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships; and

via the computer-server, making the reservation information and the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of

dealerships accessible via the a-computer network by all of the other rental locations of the plurality of locations.

Brandt discloses a computer system for providing a common user interface for software applications accessed via the world-wide-web (WWW). See Brandt, column 9, lines 7-11.

First, Brandt fails to teach, advise, or suggest “the users of the plurality of dealerships accessing the computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations” as recited in claim 1 or “the plurality of rental locations on a network of a plurality of dealerships, wherein users of the plurality of dealerships accessing a computer-server of the plurality of dealerships in order to access rental equipment inventory information for the plurality of rental locations” as recited in claim 18. In Brandt, any mention of a “network” is for a large number of people within a company to be able to communicate simultaneously over the network with a software application running on a single computer system. See Brandt, column 1, line 64 to column 2, line 2. In the car rental example of Brandt, the user accesses one rental car agency to make a reservation, not a plurality of rental car agencies. See Brandt, column 23, lines 44-46. Moreover, the “user” in Brandt is the customer of a car rental agency; whereas, in claims 1 and 18, the “user” is of the network of the plurality of dealerships.

Second, Brandt fails to teach, advise, or suggest accessing rental equipment inventory information “for the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships in order to assist customers of the plurality of rental locations” as recited in claim 1 and claim 18. In Brandt, not only is there no plurality of rental locations, but the plurality of rental locations are not on a network of a plurality of dealerships.

Third, Brandt fails to teach, advise, or suggest “displaying a reservation summary... for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 1 or “displaying...a reservation summary...for each piece of rental equipment for a plurality of customer reservations of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 18. In the car rental example of Brandt, the customer reservation is for one user and not for a plurality of customer reservations. Moreover, the one user is accessing one rental car agency and not a plurality of

rental locations. Still further, the one rental car agency is not “a plurality of dealerships” as recited in claims 1 and 18.

Fourth, Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to teach, advise, or suggest “tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information...for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 1 or “tracking and searching rental equipment inventory information...for managing rental equipment availability at the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 18. Rather, McCaslin does the opposite of tracking rental equipment inventory information for each rental location (allegedly each service center). In McCaslin, the tracking of the inventory information is for the central hub and not each service center. Moreover, the tracking in McCaslin is not for each rental location in a plurality of dealerships. See McCaslin, column 16, lines 3-7.

Fifth, Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to teach, advise, or suggest “each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 1 or “each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and exclude the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental for each rental location of the plurality of rental locations in the plurality of dealerships” as recited in claim 18. McCaslin discloses an information system for tracking, monitoring, and evaluating equipment inventory used by electric utility distribution companies. See McCaslin, column 1, lines 1-34. This system addresses the problem of tracking equipment inventory in order to fill orders from a central inventory location and to retrieve equipment back to the central inventory location. See McCaslin, column 8, line 64 to column 9, line 5, and FIG. 5. McCaslin does not disclose each user can search and display the number of pieces of rental equipment available for in-town rental and the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental. Also, McCaslin fails to disclose each user can exclude the number of pieces of rental equipment in-town but not available for rental. Moreover, even if McCaslin discloses the central inventory location and several service centers, McCaslin fails to disclose the central inventory location and several service centers are in a plurality of dealerships. Rather, just like in Brandt, the central

inventory location and several service centers are a part of one company and not a plurality of rental locations and not within a plurality of dealerships.

Sixth, Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to teach, advise, or suggest “wherein via the computer-server the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of dealerships is accessible via the network by all of the other rental locations on the network” as recited in claim 1 or “via the computer-server, making the reservation information and the rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in the plurality of dealerships accessible via the a-computer network by all of the other rental locations of the plurality of locations” as recited in claim 18. Neither Brandt nor McCaslin disclose using a computer-server of a plurality of dealerships or to make rental equipment inventory information for each rental location in a plurality of dealerships accessible via the network of a plurality of dealerships to other rental locations.

Thus, Brandt in view of McCaslin fails to teach, advise, or suggest one or more missing claimed elements as recited in claim 1 (and claim 7, which depends from claim 1) and claim 18 (and claim 24, which depends from claim 18), so that claims 1, 7, 18, and 24 are patentable over Brandt in view of McCaslin.

Claims 8 and 25

Claims 8 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Brandt (U.S. Patent No. 5,892,905) in view of McCaslin (U.S. Patent No. 6,868,397) and further in view of Craig (U.S. Patent No. 6,266,809).

In light of the foregoing remarks in connection with claim 1 (from which claim 8 variously depends) and claim 18 (from which claim 25 variously depends), Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Furthermore, Applicant incorporates by reference Applicant’s previous remarks in connection with claims 8 and 25 and the Craig reference. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 8 and 25 are patentable over Brandt, McCaslin, and Craig, taken either alone or in combination.

Response to Examiner's Official Notice

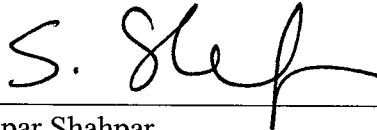
The Examiner previously took official notice citing applications by Williams (US 2003/0149600A1) and Yamaguchi et al. (US 2002/0087334A1) and Rose (U.S. Patent No. 7,069,228) as evidence. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that the cited evidence does not support the Examiner's rejections and Applicant incorporates by reference Applicant's previous remarks in connection with Examiner's Official Notice.

Conclusion

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that the subject application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is thus requested. Applicant invites the Office to telephone the undersigned attorney if he or she has any questions whatsoever regarding this Response or the subject application in general. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees to maintain this application or to deposit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 503289.

Dated: March 13, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Shahpar', written over a horizontal line.

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